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Oakland School Board Meeting, 19 August 1969

This meeting produced at least two pieces of information which are of interest:

1. Mr. Benbow indicated that the district would move ahead with its plans to employ a community relations-human relations specialist for each senior high school. This is part of a "package deal" which includes teacher salary raises. There is an allocation of \$175,000 for this personnel action.

The administration and some members of the Board wanted to begin hiring immediately, but the OFT representative objected. He asked for a one-week delay so that the union could study the proposal. The union also asked that copies of the proposal be circulated to groups and other interested community residents so that they might be able to study it and advise the Board. Mr. Benbow and Mr. Munck felt that there was insufficient time and no real need to do this inasmuch as the concept had been approved earlier by the Board. The union (OFT) asked for a two-week delay, but accepted a one-week delay as proposed by Mr. Hoopes.

2. Mr. Goady may have laid the groundwork for some significant and far reaching discussions vis-a-vis the schools--students and the community. He suggested that the Board should reach a decision on the following matters:
 - a. Time, place and location of school board meetings.
 - b. More effective community involvement.
 - c. More effective student involvement.
 - d. Decentralization of schools.
 - e. Outside evaluation of federal programs.

With the exception of #2a, there was little visible reaction by the Board. It seems that the Board is still reluctant to alter the time or place of its meetings. From the reports given by the various members, opinion favors the status quo. From all indications, the black community has either not expressed an opinion, not been sufficiently numerous, or ignored on this matter.

At any rate, points 2a-e are on the agenda for the second week in September. Goady had wanted discussions to begin prior to the opening of classes on 9 September.

The position adopted by Goady (shared by Hilburn) suggest that the issue of community control of schools may be broached by Board members rather than the community. Goady and Hilburn met on the evening of the 18th of August and developed the above list. Goady and Hilburn also want to know what kinds of concerns exist in the Oakland schools' publics and what kinds of priorities the Board should adopt (in consultation w/community) relative to these concerns. To this end he rather casually suggested that Board members should get out to their constituents and find out what they think. Reaction was slight and sluggish from other members.

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The meeting ended with a futile effort by the Black Caucus representative to get specific responses from the Board on the ESEA evaluation report. The questions were poorly framed and Mr. Benbow and Mr. Hoopes were rather high-handed in their treatment of the Caucus representative.

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